

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims pending:

- At time of the Action: Claims 1, 2, 4, 7-9, 13-15, and 21-29.
- Amended Claims: Claims 1, 4, 8, 9, 13, 21, 23, 25, 26, 28, and 29
- After this Response: Claims 1, 2, 4, 7-9, 13-15, and 21-29.

1. (Currently Amended) In a telecommunication system via an advanced intelligent network (AIN), a method for blocking future calls from a one or more callers to a callee, the method comprising:

controlling a service switching point (SSP) and communicating with a terminal associated with the one or more callers and the callee;

receiving a first instruction from the callee to access a service to block future calls from a telephone number associated with the a first caller to the callee, wherein the callee dials a special sequence comprising a combination of numerals, letters, and symbols;

providing at least one callee selection via a voice prompt responsive to the first instruction;

receiving a second instruction from the callee prior to an expiration of a predetermined time period, wherein the time period may be determined based on parameters for blocking future calls;

receiving and identifying a the telephone number to block associated with the first caller, wherein identifying the telephone number comprises at least one of a reverse caller-ID technology or a reverse white pages look-up technology;

storing the telephone number to block associated with the first caller in a caller block table in a service data point (SDP); and

playing a voice announcement to the callee that blocking future calls from the telephone associated with the first caller has been activated;

preventing, via a the service switching point (SSP), one or more phone calls from the telephone number associated with the first caller from being forwarded to a second telephone number associated with the callee; and

playing a callee-selected message ~~back~~ to the first caller of the telephone number to block when the first caller attempts to call the callee;

receiving a third instruction from the callee to access the service to block future calls from a telephone number associated with a second caller, wherein the callee dials the special sequence comprising the combination of numerals, letters, and symbols;

providing at least one callee selection via the voice prompt responsive to the third instruction;

receiving a fourth instruction from the callee prior to the expiration of the predetermined time period, wherein the time period may be determined based on parameters for blocking future calls;

receiving and identifying the telephone number to block associated with the second caller, wherein identifying the telephone number associated with the second caller is provided by the callee;

storing the telephone number to block associated with the second caller in the caller block table;

playing a voice announcement to the callee that blocking future calls from the telephone number associated with the second caller has been activated; and

preventing, via the service switching point (SSP), one or more phone calls from the telephone number associated with the second caller from being forwarded to a second telephone number associated with the callee.

2. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 1, wherein receiving the first instruction from the callee includes:

detecting an off-hook signal from the callee; and
receiving a predetermined code from the callee.

3. (Canceled).

4. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 1, wherein receiving and identifying the telephone number to block includes:

maintaining a record of the most recent telephone number that was a source of a call placed to the second telephone number immediately prior to receiving the callee's instruction to block future calls from the one or more callers to the callee; and

consulting the record to identify the most recent telephone number as the telephone number to block; and

identifying the telephone number using at least one of a reverse caller-ID technology and a reverse white pages look-up technology.

5.-6. (Canceled).

7. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 1, further comprising determining that the second instruction is an instruction from the callee to place a call block or to perform an administrative tasks.

8. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 1 further comprising prompting the callee to record a message to be played to the one or more callers.

9. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 1, further comprising prompting the callee to select a pre-recorded message to be played to the one or more callers when the one or more callers is blocked from placing a call to the callee, and further comprising enabling the callee to record the message in the callee's own voice.

10.-12. (Canceled).

13. (Currently Amended) A telecommunications system, comprising:
a call control function (CCF) in control of a service switching point (SSP) and in communication with a terminal associated with a callee and one or more callers;

a the service switching point (SSP) in communication with a first telecommunications device associated with a the callee and a second communications device associated with a first caller;

a service control point (SCP) in communication with the SSP, the SCP having stored thereon instructions and data which, when executed, cause the telecommunications system to:

recognize a first instruction from the callee to access a service to block future calls from the second telecommunication device to the callee, wherein the callee dials a special sequence comprising a combination of numerals, letters, and symbols;

provide at least one callee selection via a voice prompt responsive to the first instruction;

receive a second instruction from the callee prior to an expiration of a predetermined time period, wherein the time period may be determined based on parameters to block future calls;

receive and identify a telephone number to block associated with the first caller of the second communication device, and wherein the telephone number to block may be identified using at least one of a reverse caller-ID technology or a reverse white pages look-up technology;

store the telephone number to block associated with the first caller in a caller block table in a service data point (SDP);

play a voice announcement back to the callee that blocking future calls from the second communication device has been activated;

prevent one or more phone call from the telephone number to block associated with the first caller of the second communication device from being forwarded to the first telecommunication device associated with the callee; and

playing a callee-selected message back to the first caller when the first caller of the second communication device attempts to call the callee;

a service switching point (SSP) in communication with the first telecommunications device associated with the callee and a third communications device associated with a second caller;

a service control point (SCP) in communication with the SSP, the SCP having stored thereon instructions and data which, when executed, cause the telecommunications system to:

receive a third instruction from the callee to access the service to block future calls from a telephone number associated with the second caller, wherein the callee dials the special sequence comprising the combination of numerals, letters, and symbols;

provide at least one callee selection via the voice prompt responsive to the third instruction;

receive a fourth instruction from the callee prior to the expiration of the predetermined time period, wherein the time period may be determined based on parameters for blocking future calls;

receive and identify the telephone number to block associated with the second caller, wherein identifying the telephone number associated with the second caller is provided by the callee;

store the telephone number to block associated with the second caller in the caller block table;

play a voice announcement to the callee that blocking future calls from the telephone number associated with the second caller has been activated; and

prevent, via the service switching point (SSP), one or more phone calls from the telephone number associated with the second caller from being forwarded to a second telephone number associated with the callee.

14. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13, wherein recognizing the first instruction from the callee includes:

detecting an off-hook signal from callee; and

receiving a predetermined code from the callee; and

receiving and identifying a telephone number to block associated with the second communication device using at least one of a reverse caller-ID technology and a reverse white pages look-up technology.

15. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13, further comprising a database in communication with the SCP.

16.-20. (Canceled).

21. (Currently Amended) In a telecommunication system via a telephone network, a method for blocking future calls from a one or more callers to a callee, the method comprising:

communicating with a terminal associated with one or more callers and the callee;

receiving a first instruction from the callee to access a service to block future calls from a telephone number associated with ~~the~~ a first caller to the callee, wherein the callee dials a special sequence comprising a combination of numerals, letters, and symbols;

providing at least one callee selection via a voice prompt responsive to the first instruction;

sending a voice announcement to the callee if a second instruction is not received before a predetermined time period has expired, wherein the time period may be determined based on parameters to block future calls;

~~enabling the user to manually identify a telephone number to block associated with the caller; and~~

receiving and identifying the telephone number to block associated with the first caller, wherein identifying the telephone number comprises at least one of a reverse caller-ID technology or a reverse white pages look-up technology;

storing the telephone number to block associated with the first caller in a caller block table;

playing a voice announcement to the callee that blocking future calls has been activated;

preventing one or more phone calls from the telephone number associated with the first caller from being forwarded to a second telephone number associated with the callee;

receiving a third instruction from the callee to access the service to block future calls from a second telephone number associated with a second caller;

receiving and identifying the second telephone number to block is given by the callee; and

storing the second telephone number to block given by the callee in the second caller block table; and

preventing one or more phone calls from the telephone number associated with the second caller from being forwarded to a second telephone number associated with the callee.

22. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 21, wherein receiving the first instruction from the callee includes:

detecting an off-hook signal from the callee; and

receiving a predetermined code from the callee.

23. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 21, wherein identifying the telephone number to block includes:

maintaining a record of the most recent telephone number that was a source of a call placed to the second telephone number immediately prior to receiving the callee's instruction to block future calls from the one or more callers to the callee; and

consulting the record to identify the most recent telephone number as the telephone number to block; and

identifying the telephone number to block using at least one of a reverse caller-ID technology and a reverse white pages look-up technology.

24. (Previously Presented) The method as in claim 1, further comprising removing a block placed on a specific telephone number.

25. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 1, further comprising sending a voice message to one or more callers whose telephone number has been unblocked.

26. (Currently Amended) The method as in claim 1, further comprising blocking the telephone number associated with a recent one or more callers using at least one of a reverse caller-ID technology and a reverse white pages look-up technology and blocking one or more telephone numbers as specified by the callee.

27. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 13, further comprising removing a block placed on a specific telephone number.

28. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 13, further comprising sending a voice message to a one or more callers whose telephone number has been unblocked.

29. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 13, further comprising blocking the telephone number associated with a recent one or more callers and blocking one or more telephone numbers as specified by the callee.